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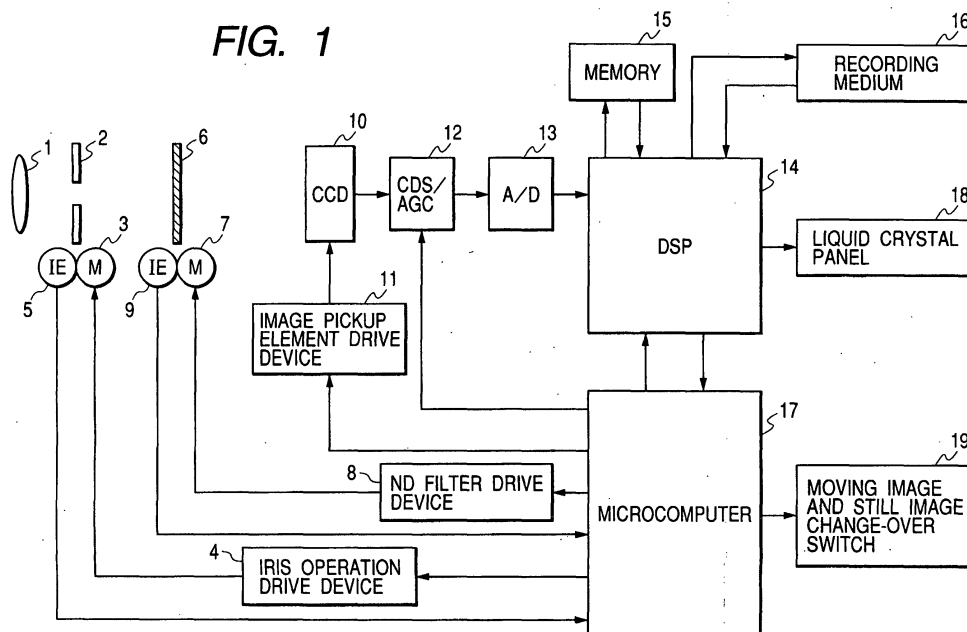
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(54) Image Pickup Apparatus having Iris Member and Filter Units

(57) An image pickup apparatus capable of preventing a decline of resolution of a still image while keeping a dynamic range of exposure control. The image pickup apparatus capable of photographing with changing over a moving image and a still image, includes an iris mechanism for changing an amount of light input to an image pickup element by changing an aperture diameter, a filter unit, having a single density or a plurality of densities,

for changing the amount of the light input to the image pickup element by its advancing towards and withdrawing from the aperture diameter of the iris mechanism, a unit for driving the iris mechanism and the filter unit independently, and a control unit for setting the filter unit in one of two types of states such as fully covering the aperture diameter of the iris mechanism and fully withdrawing from the aperture diameter in the still image photography.

FIG. 1





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 01 8033

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X Y	EP 0 340 678 A (POLAROID CORP) 8 November 1989 (1989-11-08) * column 2, line 48 - column 3, line 44 * * column 6, line 6 - line 50 * * column 7, line 33 - column 8, line 34 * * figures 3,6-12 * -----	1-6, 10-15 7-9, 16-18	H04N5/235
X A	US 4 739 411 A (BOLTON RICHARD H) 19 April 1988 (1988-04-19) * column 4, line 11 - line 31 * * column 5, line 47 - column 6, line 62 * * column 7, line 26 - line 46 * * figure 2 * -----	1-3,12, 13 4-6,10, 11,14,15	
Y	US 5 440 343 A (STEVENS ERIC G ET AL) 8 August 1995 (1995-08-08) * column 3, line 27 - line 32 * * column 5, line 22 - line 42 * -----	7-9, 16-18	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			H04N
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		9 February 2004	Didierlaurent, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

- No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

- As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

- Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

- None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-6,10-15

Image pickup apparatus with a filter driving unit for driving the filter unit according to the iris aperture diameter

2. claims: 7-9,16-18

Image pickup apparatus with a filter driving unit and an image size changing unit for driving the filter unit according to a predetermined image size

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 03 01 8033

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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09-02-2004

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82